> **There's something about the blues that speaks about integrity, truth, realness and grit. It's not called deep blues for nothing.**
> ***Stephen Dale Petit***

wanted to hear it played to the highest standard. He's a legendary road warrior and motor freak who loves pounding the highways in his pimped Mercedes Benz. It's a bit tasty under the hood apparently. In typical form, his car's bonnet is still warm from a recent outing…

CB: I'm still doing one night stands. In fact, I just got back from Germany yesterday…
MT: You never stop working…
CB: What else can I do?
MT: You're always gainfully employed. I'm underemployed at the moment.
CB: I know what that's like, and I hate it.
MT: I'm getting withdrawal symptoms from not playing enough. You do play a lot, don't you?
CB: This year it's 100 concerts, and that's half of what we normally do. I get to drive a long way, which I like doing. I've got a nice car. Drive to Berlin and play a couple of shows there, play somewhere else and drive back, and on we go…
MT: Do you have a band with you, or do you have an agent that organises all this?
CB: The band is permanent. My professional band started off in December 1952. Sixty years this Christmas! We play traditional stuff. A lot of Duke Ellington stuff, which is nice music to play… and some blues things. We played a lot of blues before, but my blues guitar player John Slaughter died of cancer two years ago. He'd been with me since '64. He was a lovely guitar player.
MT: The blues is still there. It's alive and well in the people that are playing it and listening to it.
SDP: It's part of why we're having this conversation…
MT: Of course it is. We wouldn't be talking about it if people weren't interested…
SDP: There's been a resurgence in this country over the last five years. I forget what the statistic is but, in terms of genre, it's been doubling its market share, if you will, year on year for a couple of years. It's been a long time since blues has done anything like that…
MT: It would do, because the way that people access music has changed. There will always be people who seek out music that's got something in it for them, and reflects how they feel…

Barber clowns with his trombone during one of his band's residencies at the Marquee, 1962.

Emotional rescue: (l-r) Mick Taylor, Ronnie Wood, Stephen Dale Petit and Chris Barber play to save the 100 Club, December 1, 2010.

SDP: There's something about the blues. Especially when you have pop stars, the latest member of the hit parade being decided on a game show. [Chris laughs]. There's something about the blues that speaks, and always will speak, because there's so much integrity and truth and realness, and grit and all that. It's not called deep blues for nothing. The same thing that attracted you is the same thing that attracted Chris and the same thing that attracted me.
MT: It's difficult to put your finger on one exact word. It's kind of sassy, sexual, sensuous. It makes you want to dance. You want to move. Sometimes it would be sad, but more often than not it would be happy.
SDP: Dangerous?
MT: Yeah, edgy. Fortunately, I did join John Mayall's Bluesbreakers, and that was really the turning point for me. Not only going to America and getting the opportunity to play there… That is where I saw most of my first blues concerts: Muddy Waters, and Howlin' Wolf, and all the other guys. I was too young to go up to London when I was 13, but I made up for it later.
CB: You did, but you haven't caught up with Keith Richards yet
MT: I don't think I'll catch up with him…
CB: No one ever will. [laughs]

It might seem strange that a trombonist could prove to be such an influential figure on electric guitarists. Chris obviously feels an